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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 008016

SIPDIS

BAGHDAD FOR LITT, MNF-I MG BARGEWELL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/18/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [EG](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: ARAB LEAGUE SECRETARY GENERAL MOUSSA TO IRAQ:  
ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON VISIT

REF: CAIRO 7963 (NOTAL)

Classified by ECPO Minister Counselor Michael Corbin for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Arab League Secretary General intends to travel to Iraq October 20-22 to spearhead renewed Arab engagement on Iraq's political process (reftel). Moussa requested any technical assistance that Embassy Baghdad or Embassy Cairo was able to offer on travel and other logistics regarding the visit. Below are additional details provided to the Embassy October 17 by Moussa's Chief of Staff Hesham Youssef which update original plans discussed in reftel. Post appreciates the ongoing coordination with Embassy Baghdad on this topic.

2. (C) Youssef told Emboff that the delegation would consist of 39 people (11-12 Arab League working staff, 10-11 Arab League security, and 16 journalists). Additionally, a 2-3 person Arab League advance team would arrive in Baghdad from Amman October 18 to begin liaison with the GOI. Youssef said that Moussa and delegation were no longer planning on a Bahraini charter flight, but would rather use "Digla" Airlines -- an Iraqi-owned company based in Egypt that is already flying regular, twice-weekly flights between Cairo and Baghdad. After delivering the delegation to Baghdad, the aircraft would fly to Irbil and wait there for additional in-country travel, as well as the return flight to Cairo. Youssef did not know the make or model of the Digla aircraft but pledged to provide Post with this information if required.

3. (C) Describing Moussa's present itinerary, Youssef shared the following: Moussa and company would depart Cairo early Thursday, October 20 for Baghdad, and conduct meetings with Iraqi government officials all day Thursday. Moussa intends to meet President Talabani, Prime Minister Jafari, and senior Ministers, among others. Moussa and delegation are planning to spend the evening at the Mugamma al Wuzarra next to the Green Zone. On Friday, Moussa is planning meetings with the Muslim Ulema Council and SCIRI leader al Hakim in Baghdad at locations yet to be determined. Moussa intends to conduct post-Iftar meetings Friday evening at the residence of Iraqi Foreign Minister Zebari, including a possible meeting with U.S. Ambassador Khalilzad. Early morning Saturday, Moussa intends to travel to Najaf, either by helicopter or by motorcade, for meetings with Sistani and Sadr. Youssef shared that the United Nations was unable to provide transportation for this movement, but that the GOI was making necessary preparations. Returning to Baghdad from Najaf, Moussa will fly to Irbil via the Digla charter flight later Saturday to meet Kurdish leader Barzani. Depending on a possible post 6 p.m. flight curfew, Youssef said, Moussa may stay the night at Barzani's residence, or return direct to Cairo via the Digla charter.

4. (C) Comment: Post appreciates Baghdad's assistance and coordination on this subject, and welcomes additional suggestions on how best to help facilitate Moussa's visit.  
End comment.

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